

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TIJUAN 00160 090249Z

ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-02 USIA-15 SP-02 AID-05 HA-05 EB-08 HEW-06

CA-01 IO-14 /083 W

-----025534 090257Z /73

P 082351Z MAR 78

FM AMCONSUL TIJUANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2329

AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY

UNCLAS TIJUANA 0160

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SWEL MX

SUBJ: EXTENT OF BAJA CALIFORNIA RAIN AND FLOOD DAMAGE

REF: TIJUANA 0136

1. FOLLOWING IS MARCH 8 ASSESSMENT BY STATE AUTHORITY OF DAMAGE IN BAJA CALIFORNIA CAUSED BY LAST WEEK'S RAIN. OFFICIALS PRESENTLY UNABLE TO ESTIMATE TOTAL AMOUNT OF DAMAGE OR COST OF RECONSTRUCTION, ALTHOUGH LATTER FIGURE MAY BE IN AREA OF 500,000,000 PESOS. TOTAL DEATHS THROUGHOUT THE STATE BECAUSE OF STORM ARE 21.

2. TIJUANA: FIFTY PERCENT OF CITY STREETS DAMAGED AND MINIMAL ESTIMATED TIME TO REPAIR IS SIX MONTHS. THERE IS NO KNOWN SERIOUS DAMAGE TO STRUCTURES. RODRIGUEZ DAM TO EAST OF TIJUANA IS SOUND. CAPACITY IS 137 MILLION CUBIC METERS OF WATER AND IT PRESENTLY HOLDS 73 MILLION CUBIC METERS. TOTAL OF 10,000 FAMILIES IN LOW LAND AND CANYON AREAS HAVE BEEN OR WILL BE IMMEDIATELY EVACUATED AND NOT PERMITTED TO RETURN. ULTIMATELY IT IS PLANNED TO RELOCATE 40,000 FAMILIES. ESTIMATED COST OF EVACUATION IS 80,000 PESOS PER FAMILY. (STATE HAS HAD UNDERWAY FOR SOME TIME A LONG-TERM PROJECT OF RESETTLING THESE PEOPLE IN HIGH ELEVATIONS OF THE CITY. UNDER EXISTING PROCEDURE, THE STATE PUTS IN STREETS AND NECESSARY SERVICES AND SELLS SMALL LOTS AT LOW COST AND LONG UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 TIJUAN 00160 090249Z

TERM PAYMENT WITH LOW INTEREST. SETTLERS ARE EXPECTED TO BUILD THEIR OWN DWELLINGS. AT PRESENT TIME WE ASSUME RELOCATION EFFORTS WILL BE PRIMARILY A DRASTIC STEP-UP OF THIS OPERATION). PRIORITY WILL ALSO BE GIVEN TO COMPLETION OF CHANNELIZATION OF THE TIJUANA RIVER.

3. TECATE: TEN PERCENT OF THE STREETS ARE SEVERELY DAMAGED AND

65 FAMILIES HAVE BEEN EVACUATED.

4. ENSENADA: FIFTY PERCENT OF THE STREETS ARE DAMAGED, BUT THERE IS NO IMPORTANT DAMAGE TO STRUCTURES. SEVERAL HUNDRED FAMILIES ARE BEING RELOCATED. IN THE AGRICULTURAL AREAS TO THE SOUTH NEAR SAN QUINTIN 50 PERCENT OF THE CURRENT CROP IS DAMAGED.

5. TRANSPENINSULAR HIGHWAY: BETWEEN TIJUANA AND GUERRERO NEGRO (SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF BAJA), IT IS CUT IN 16 PLACES, AND 3 BRIDGES ARE TOTALLY DESTROYED. AUTHORITIES HOPE TO HAVE ROAD OPENED IN WEEK AT LEAST FOR HIGH CLEARANCE VEHICLES. SIX HELICOPTERS AND THREE AIRPLANES ARE OPERATING ALONG THE ROAD MAINLY TO MAKE FOOD DROPS TO ISOLATED COMMUNITIES. RECONSTRUCTION OF HIGHWAY AS WELL AS CITY STREETS WILL BE CONTRACTED OUT TO PRIVATE MEXICAN COMPANIES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISASTER RELIEF, FLOODS, DISASTER REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TIJUAN00160
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780105-0621
Format: TEL
From: TIJUANA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780390/aaaacyqa.tel
Line Count: 78
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 32e70fcb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 TIJUANA 136
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3397795
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EXTENT OF BAJA CALIFORNIA RAIN AND FLOOD DAMAGE
TAGS: SWEL, MX
To: STATE MEXICO
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/32e70fcb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014